

small Colonies into a great and growing nation of more than 300 [million]* people. They've made America a melting pot of cultures from all across the world. They've made diversity one of the great strengths of our democracy. And all of us here today are here to honor and pay tribute to that great notion of America.

Those of you taking the oath of citizenship at this ceremony hail from 30 different nations. You represent many different ethnicities and races and religions. But you all have one thing in common, and that is a shared love of freedom. This love of liberty is what binds our Nation together, and this is the love that makes us all Americans.

One man with special appreciation for liberty is Mya Soe from Burma. As a member of the Shan ethnic group, Mya faced discrimination and oppression at the hands of Burma's military junta. When he tried to reach local villagers—when he tried to teach local villagers how to read and write the Shan language, the regime interrogated him and harassed him. In 2000, he left a life of fear for a life of freedom. He now works as a painter in the Charlottesville community. Today, we welcome this brave immigrant as a citizen-to-be of the United States of America.

I'm sure there are other stories like Mya's among you. But we must remember that the desire for freedom burns inside every man and woman and child. More than two centuries ago, this desire of freedom was—had inspired the subjects of a mighty empire to declare themselves free and independent citizens of a new nation. Today, that same desire for freedom has inspired 72 immigrants from around the world to become citizens of the greatest nation on Earth, the United States of America.

I congratulate you. I welcome you. I wish you all a happy Fourth of July. Thanks for inviting me. May God bless you, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:07 a.m. at Monticello. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Timothy M. Kaine of Virginia and his wife, Anne Holton.

* White House correction.

Statement on the Death of Senator Jesse Helms

July 4, 2008

Laura and I are deeply saddened by the passing of our good friend and a great American, Senator Jesse Helms. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Dot, and all the members of the Helms family.

Throughout his long public career, Senator Jesse Helms was a tireless advocate for the people of North Carolina, a stalwart defender of limited government and free enterprise, a fearless defender of a culture of life, and an unwavering champion of those struggling for liberty. Under his leadership, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee was a powerful force for freedom. And today, from Central America to Central Europe and beyond, people remember, in the dark days when the forces of tyranny seemed on the rise, Jesse Helms took their side.

Jesse Helms was a kind, decent, and humble man and a passionate defender of what he called "the miracle of America." So it is fitting that this great patriot left us on the Fourth of July. He was once asked if he had any ambitions beyond the United States Senate. He replied, "The only thing I am running for is the Kingdom of Heaven." Today, Jesse Helms has finished the race, and we pray he finds comfort in the arms of the loving God he strove to serve throughout his life.

The President's Radio Address

July 5, 2008

Good morning. This weekend, Americans are celebrating the anniversary of our Nation's independence. Two hundred and thirty-two years ago, our Founding Fathers came together in Philadelphia to proclaim that all men are created equal and that they are endowed by their Creator with unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

The man who wrote those immortal words was Thomas Jefferson. Yesterday, I celebrated the Fourth of July at Monticello, Jefferson's home in Virginia. While there, I witnessed an event that would have made the author of the Declaration of Independence